Statement

Details of scheme of Debt Waiver and Debt Relief for farmers

A scheme of Debt Waiver and Debt Relief for farmers has been announced in the Union Budget 2008-09. The salient features of the proposed scheme are:

(i) All agricultural loans disbursed by scheduled commercial banks, regional rural banks and cooperative credit institutions up to March 31, 2007 and overdue as on December 31, 2007 will be covered under the scheme.

(ii) For marginal farmers (*i.e.* holding upto 1 hectare) and small farmers (1-2 hectare), there will be a complete waiver of all loans that were overdue on December 31, 2007 and which remained unpaid until February 29, 2008. In respect of other farmers, there will be a One Time Settlement (OTS) scheme for all loans that were overdue on December 31, 2007 and which remained unpaid until, February 29, 2008. Under the OTS, a rebate of 25 per cent will be given against payment of the balance of 75 per cent.

(iii) Agricultural loans which were restructured and rescheduled by banks in 2004 and 2006 through special packages and other loans rescheduled in the normal course as per RBI guidelines, will also be eligible either for a waiver or OTS on the same pattern.

(iv) The implementation of the debt waiver and debt relief scheme will be completed by June 30, 2008. Upon being granted debt waiver or signing an agreement for debt relief under the OTS, the farmer would be entitled to fresh agricultural loans from the banks in accordance with normal rules.

(v) It is estimated that about 3 crore small and marginal farmers and about 1 crore other farmers will be benefited under the proposed scheme. The total value of overdue loans being waived is estimated at Rs. 50,000 crore and the OTS relief on the overdue loans is estimated at Rs. 10,000 crore.

2. Considering that high rates of interest often act as a determnt to farmers from availing farm credit, it was announced in the Union Budget (2006-07), that crop loans upto Rs.3 lakh would be given at 7% rate of interest. Accordingly, crop loans are presently being made available at 7% at the ground level by almost all banks with interest subvention from the Government of India. This scheme is continued for 2007-08 and 2008-09 also.

Government efforts to meet shortage of wheat

†1565. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that sowing area of wheat has reduced to about 70 lakh hectare this year as compared to last year;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith reasons therefor, State-wise;

(c) the names of districts which have been facing the shortage of fertilizers and good quality seeds and also those affected by the delayed crushing of sugarcane;

(d) the steps being taken by Government to meet the shortage of wheat; and

(e) the steps taken by Government to increase the production of rice, coarse grain and pulses?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The sowing area of wheat during 2007-08 (2nd advance estimates) is estimated at 271.99 lakh hectares which is 7.96 lakh hectares less than the last year's sowing area of 279.95 lakh hectares. The reduction in area was due to inclement weather condition at the time of sowing of the crop. The State-wise details of sowing area of wheat are given in the statement (*See* below).

(c) The district-wise information is not maintained. As regards fertilizers, only 50% of indigenously produced urea is under movement and distribution control of the Government. As per the New Pricing Scheme (NPS) Stage-III implemented with effect from 1st October 2006, efforts are made to reach urea to each and every district. The responsibility of meeting the full requirement of decontrol Phoshate and Potassic fertilizer in any State is with the concerned State Governments. At all India level, the availability of fertilizers during Rabi 2007-08 was in excess of the quantity sold and against requirement of 62.86 lakh quintals of certified/quality seeds of wheat, 66.99 lakh quintals of seeds were available. During the current sugar season 2007-08, the late crushing of sugarcane has been reported in the States of Bihar, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

(d) Government has banned the export of wheat on private account till further orders. Wheat export from Central Pool is also banned, Import of wheat on private account at zero duty has been permitted till further orders.

(e) To increase the production of rice and pulses, Government has launched National Food Security Mission (NFSM) from Rabi 2007-08. The NFSM aims at increasing the production of rice by 10 million tonnes and pulses by 2 million tonnes by the end of 11th Five Year Plan, i.e. by 2011-12. To increase the production of coarse cereals, Integrated Cereals Development Programmes in Coarse Cereals based cropping systems is under implementation since October 2000.

Statement

The State-wise details of sowing area of wheat

State	Area ('000 Hectare)		
	2nd Advance Estimate 2007-08*	Final Estimates 2006-07	Absolute difference
Andhra Pradesh	9.0	10.0	-1.0
Assam	58.0	60.0	-2.0
Bihar	2050.0	2049.7	0.3
Chhattisgarh	90.0	91.5	-1.5
Gujarat	1353.0	1201.0	152.0
Haryana	2400.0	2376.0	24.0
Himachal Pradesh	361.0	362.2	-1.2
Jammu & Kashmir	251.0	260.0	-9.0

STATE/UT's		Production (000'MT)	Production (000'MT)
Jharkhand	65.0	84.3	-19.3
Karnataka	230.0	269.0	-39.0
Madhya Pradesh	3520.0	3992.8	-472.8
Maharashtra	1182.0	1231.0	-49.0
Orissa	4.0	3.9	0.1
Pūnjab	3480.0	3467.0	13.0
Rajasthan	2565.0	2564.8	0.2
Uttar Pradesh	8741.0	9197.6	-456.6
Uttaranchal	397.0	391.0	6.0
West Bengal	400.00	350.6	49.4
Others	43.0	32.1	10.9
ALL-INDIA:	27199.0	27994.5	-795.5

* Released on 07 02.2008

Taking away of major share of farm prices by middlemen

1566. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA:
SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India grows nearly 11 per cent of all the world's vegetables and 15 per cent of all fruits;

(b) whether India's share in global market is only 1.7 per cent in vegetables and 0.5 per cent in fruit;

(c) whether the Indian farmer receives less than a fifth of the high price that the consumer pays and the lion's share is usurped by the long chain of assorted middlemen, transport, wholesalers, and retailers who bring the produce from farm to market;

(d) if so, how pathetic is plight of farmer; and

(e) the remedial steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) India Produces around 111.77 Million MTs of vegetables and 57.73 million of MTs of fruits, which accounts for nearly 11.90 per cent and 10.90 per cent of country's share in the world production of vegetables and fruits, respectively. While the India' share in the global market in vegetables and fruits stands at 1.70 per cent and 0.50 per cent respectively. Details of production of vegetables and fruits and export of horiticulture products are given in Statement I & II (*See* below).